BALLET TODAY

NOVEMBER, 1956
Price 1/6

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA
Bolshoi Ballet Reviews

Ballet Today

IN my Editorial in September I made a plea that the Directors of Covent Garden should not be hampered in maintaining the Opera House which has become a source of pride and prestige to every Englishman who likes to see Britain respected for her contributions whether it be to the realms of art, literature or sport. None of us however could have foreseen the outcry which came about as a result of the proposed cancellation of the Bolshoi visit to London. As cables shuttled forth between London and Moscow, diplomats intervened in what had now become a matter of international importance. And so ballet came into its own, with all the national newspapers running headlines and front page news, and there was much talk about this visit of the Bolshoi representing a great step forward in Anglo-Soviet relations.

Which, come to think of it, was what Covent Garden pointed out months ago when they claimed in their booklet *A Review* 1946-56 " the Royal Opera House is to-day playing a larger part in the life of the nation than ever before in its history, and special performances of opera and ballet are becoming a regular feature of the hospitality offered by Her Majesty's Government to foreign royal guests, heads of state and other important visitors."

* * *

It was not, however, an easy period for Editors. We had to go to press some time and most of the dance press were standing by with a special supplement of pictures and stories on the Bolshoi ballet. I had an alternative set of pages ready to switch should the visit be definitely cancelled, but by the time I reached my deadline no such decision had been made. As I turned it over in my mind I thought " if it is left to the artists to make the decision they will come," and I suspected that Moscow was experiencing a similar outcry to that which broke out in London. In publishing my welcome to Ulanova and the Company I expressed my faith in the artists, they did not let me—or their audiences—down.

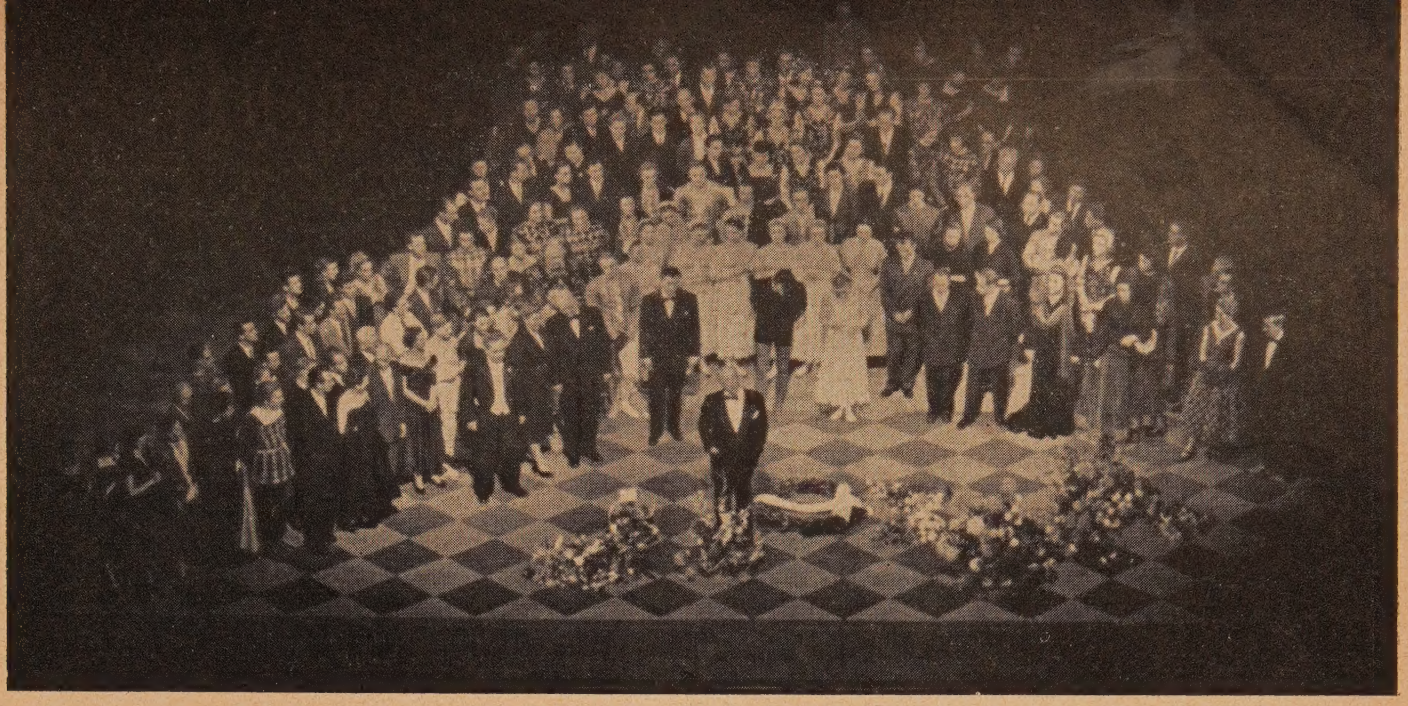
No. 10. NOVEMBER VOL. 9

CONTENTS

London Ballet Month 4
News from the World 6
Australian Theatre Ballet by Walter Gore 8
Interview with Alfred Rodrigues 10
Svetlana Beriosova in Careers in Pictures 11
XVIIth Century Ballet in Monaco 15
Music Review: At the Theatres 16
New Recordings 17
Letter to the Editor " Is Ballet dull " ? 19
Ballet Guide for the Month 19
New Book Reviews 21
Young Dancers 23

Published and Edited by Estelle Herf from 15, *Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey,* (*Telephone*: *Elmbridge* 9743) *to which all Editorial, advertising and other communications should be addressed.*

Printed by Richard Madley Ltd., 54 Grafton Way, W.1, England. SOLE AGENTS: Australasia: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch Ltd.; South Africa: Central News Agency Ltd.; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: Messrs. Kingstons Ltd.



BACKSTAGE

FIRST NIGHT

IT was difficult to tell which was the greater —the crush outside or in the Royal Opera House on the opening night of the Bolshoi Ballet. Outside the crowd of sightseers, held back in a semi-circle by the police, peered in, inside a semi-circle of photographers looked out with their cameras poised ready to shoot the galaxy of celebrities as they came through the main entrance into the foyer. I have never seen so many photographers and newspapermen in one spot before, and not only for English newspapers, such famous magazines as *Paris Match* had sent their representatives along. During the intervals one could see the journalists sitting about making notes for their reports which had to be telephoned through later, or sent by runner, because many of them were unable to get through by telephone, all lines were engaged. I heard one of them telling the others " I just doubled out to 'phone the office only to find these reporting types in every telephone, thinking I might find a telephone in the pub opposite I went in but *even there* they had penetrated."

Anton Dolin escorting Margot Fonteyn to the crush bar found it hard going—on every other step Margot was stopped by someone. Did he ever get his drink? Margot looked radiant in a flame coloured dress, which showed her dark hair to perfection. Beryl Grey, with her husband as escort, wore a midnight blue dress beautifully embroidered in crystal, and with floating back panels of net in different shades of blue. As Moira Shearer entered the foyer the photographers crowded around her, and her husband Ludovic Kennedy stood back modestly to let Moira take the limelight, but Moira would not have this, and drew him into the picture. Gilbert Harding stood growling that he had lost his partner in the crush.

At every interval as we went to the doors of the main entrance to get some air a large crowd still remained outside hopefully trying to get a glimpse of their favourites, and when I left the party which followed the performance the fans were still waiting in the street.

The party, to which 500 guests were invited, was held on the stage, where a wonderful buffet supper was laid out. I saw Svetlana Beriosova, looking as delightful as ever, talking animatedly to some of the Russians in their own language. Ram Gopal, a resplendent figure in his native dress, told me how much he had enjoyed seeing Ulanova. Having just completed his own highly successful season at the Festival Hall, followed by a season at the Hippodrome he is off to Paris to dance in the Théâtre des Champs Elysées.

Ulanova seemed almost on the point of tears as the applause went on and on after the curtain fell on the last act, and I thought it was rather an ordeal for her to have to stand so long whilst speeches were made. Ulanova did not make an appearance at the party, and this was a wise decision because here too there was a terrific crush, and one felt that Ulanova had given so much of herself in this performance—she should not be asked to give more.

FIRST HUNGARIAN BALLET FILM

The shooting of the first Hungarian ballet film " Cavalier Pázmán " has begun. The film is made after the comic ballad by János Arany and the music is by György Ránky and the choreography by Vera Pásztor and Ernó Vashegyi. The title role will be danced by Imre Eck.

AWARDS FOR HUNGARIAN STATE FOLK ENSEMBLE

Three of the dancers in the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble which had a six-week London season this summer, have been given Government awards on their return to Budapest. Seven other company members were also decorated.

The dancers were Mrs. István Kiss, Mihály Papp and Zoltán Mátyus.

Decorations were presented by Deputy Minister of Culture Gyula Kállai who congratulated the company on their " highly successful Western Tour."

From London the company went on for a short season in Genoa, Monte Carlo and Aix-les-Bains before returning home.

CYRIL BEAUMONT SCHOLARSHIP

The Governors of the Sadler's Wells School in agreement with the Committee of the Cecchetti Society, wish it to be clearly understood that this Scholarship is available to British and Commonwealth students only.

NEW BOOK

The Directors of Sadler's Wells Trust gave a party in October to celebrate the publication of a new book on the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Edited by Mr. Russell Brown, the book contains a comprehensive record of the recent activities of the Company and includes articles by Frederick Ashton, Kenneth Macmillan, Constant Lambert and many other well-known people, also a message from the Company's Director, Dame Ninette de Valois. The book, which is fully illustrated, retails at 6s. and is now on sale.

SPANISH INVASION

With Antonio's season at the Palace finishing on 3rd November, London will have yet another famous Spanish dancer—Luisillo, who is to open at the Princes on the 31st October. Having completed a highly successful season in Dublin, Luisillo and his Company then paid a short visit to Belgium. Prior to that the Company made a five months' tour of America, which included a New York season. Luisillo, whose programme savours of Spanish dancing revue, will have Maria Rosario as principal ballerina, Teresa Amaya as principal Gypsy dancer, and, in addition to ten solo dancers there will be Nina de Almaden, the Flamenco singer, and Maria Vivo, the Spanish singer. Luisillo last appeared in London five years ago, and his present London season will run until Saturday November 24th.

Photo above:

The full company assembles on stage and speeches are made. Photo taken by Houston Rogers on the first night of the Bolshoi Ballet at the Royal Opera House, London.

LONDON
BALLET MONTH

By

A. V. COTON

Left: *Raissa Struchkova as Maria and Alexander Lapauri as the Khan in* The Fountain of Bakhchisarai.

Right: *Photo taken by Houston Rogers on the first night of the Bolshoi Ballet's performance at the Royal Opera House, London, showing Ulanova and Yuri Zhdanov in the title roles of* Romeo and Juliet.

A photograph of Ulanova as Giselle appears on page 2.

HEAVEN KNOWS we've waited long enough to find out what the Russians can do with Ballet these days, and what is very clear from the four works given in this visit by the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet of Moscow, is that they can do plenty. All considerations of politics, patriotism and partisanship apart—it was difficult to keep sufficiently detached about the season. The slowness of news from Moscow during the summer months of waiting; the mad scramble for tickets when bookings at last opened; the lack of any hard news about who would actually dance; then, on top of these frustrating factors, the odd semi-political incident of the letter in " Pravda ", signed by leading members of the company, which seemed

BOLSHOI

to threaten a last-minute cancellation because of the unusual casuistic problem of Nina Ponomareva. To add to the agonising suspense, the Press were called to a special conference on Tuesday the 2nd at 6 p.m. for an important announcement by Mr. Chulaki, the company's director. First we were reassured by Mr. David Webster that despite fearful difficulties of adequate rehearsal, the opening performance would happen as scheduled; then the news of the cancellation of Friday's premiére of *Swan Lake* came. So, altogether, the atmosphere of strain, of eager expectancy, of partial frustration was given a further twist in the final 24 hours before the opening performance.

But when the curtain rose on Wednesday, October 3rd, all despair vanished, most doubts were killed. One might not like the new Soviet choreography, one could (perhaps) shudder at the realistic scenery—but there was no doubt that the Soviet system produces *dancers*. Later, as the performance developed and Ulanova's magic began to work (even upon those most disappointed with the decor and the choreographic structure) we were aware of watching the results of a completely new conception of Ballet. At almost no point does it resemble the Western idea of what Ballet is for: how it is best made: what kind of subjects are most suitable: what kind of personality the dancer should acquire in order to realise the character most completely.

Romeo and Juliet tells Shakespeare's story in terms of dramatic dance-and-mime with clarity and great emotional impact; it compresses those incidents of the play which do not dynamically advance the plot, though nothing of significance is omitted. The court scenes are opulent without any kind of vulgarity, the streets are spacious, the halls, rooms and chambers big enough for the dance action without suggesting the interior of a cathedral or a railway station.

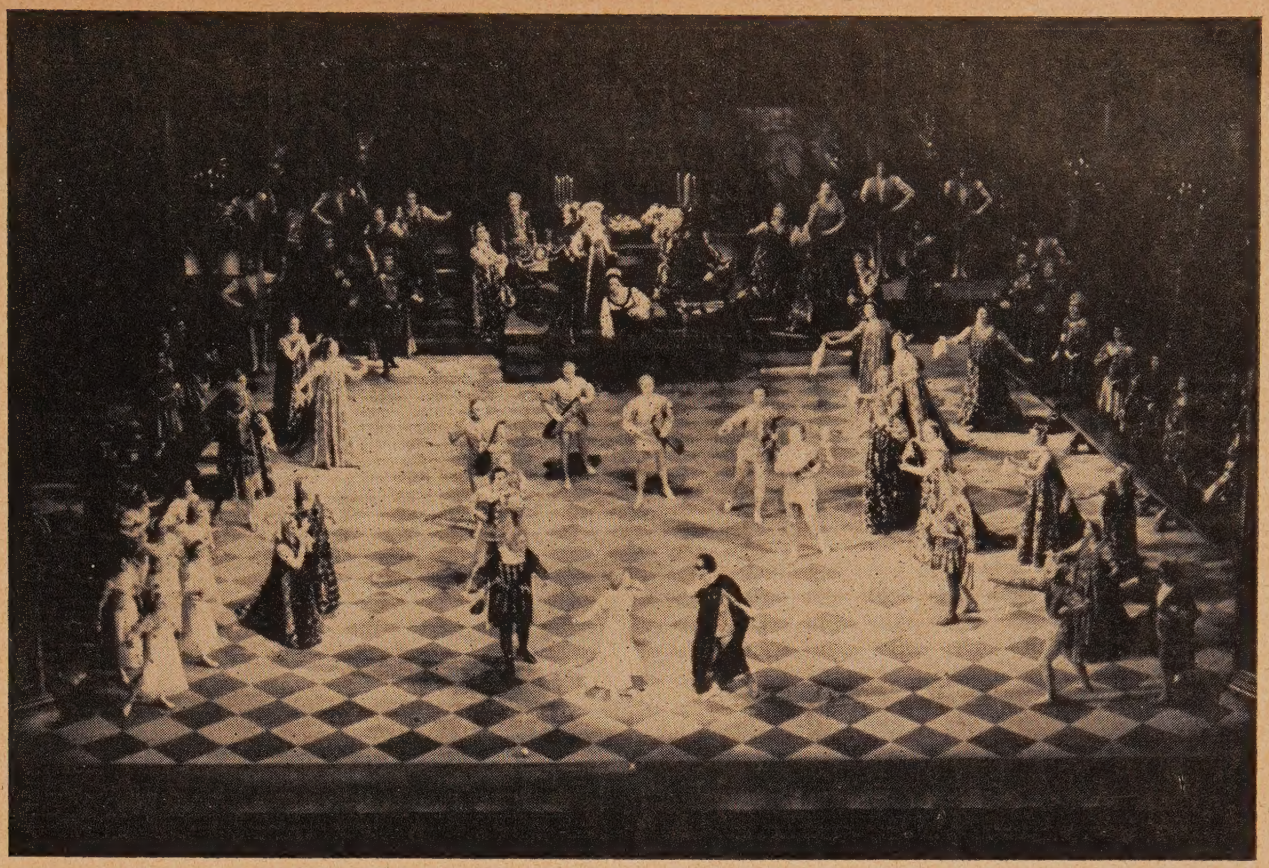
The Fountain of Bakhchisarai, based on a Pushkin poem, tells of a Tatar savage touched by noble emotions when faced with a captive Polish maid, brought back by his warriors from a raid. Maria, having lost her betrothed in the fight against the raiders, is inconsolable; the Khan's awesome attentions are, to her, meaningless. His now cast-off favourite wife, Zarema, is possessed with jealousy for Maria and stabs her; the Khan refuses to kill Zarema with his own hand. Later, when we see him inconsolably resigned to a life without Maria, his bodyguard throw her from the battlements. This is the least satisfactory of the ballets, though it was performed with an unbelievable degree of sensibility and sympathy. Its middle two acts (of four) could easily be compressed into a single scene, using a blackout or momentary curtain to denote the passing of time; this could enable the choreography to be tightened, and quite a deal of it to be eliminated without any great loss of dramatic significance. As they stand, these scenes contain a lot of padding, and many ensemble dances which are just not sufficiently vivid as choreography.

Swan Lake is an entirely fresh re-arrangement of the old choreography of Gorsky (the Moscow regisseur who made a complete revision of the Petipa-Ivanov version in 1911), with additions by Messerer and Radunsky. The story is almost precisely the same as in our familiar versions but the dance incidents each vary either in duration or choreographic shape—or both. The big change is in the finale of the fourth act; instead of hero and heorine having to embrace death as the only solution of their plight, here they are happily united, the Magician's spell over Odette is broken and she and Siegfried become—as in many another good fairytale—a happy-ever-after couple.

Giselle, fourth of the productions, although less varied than *Swan Lake* in its choreographic differences from more familiar versions, was the work standing at the greatest distance from any Western ballet—because its old story has been carefully thought out afresh and the resulting choreography has a clarity and tightness not ever seen before. Not a muscle moves unnecessarily in any dancer; each gesture, the lift of a hand, the slightest shrug of a shoulder, the very weight of a step or the angle of turn while a character is moving, uncompromisingly advances the story one millimetre nearer its conclusion, or else strengthens, inflects or throws a fresh ray of light on the personality of the character being created.

It is, perhaps, a test of one's artistic feeling or else an exercise in self-discipline, to have to look at these ballets (and these dancers) without in any way comparing them with the works and personalities already known to us. This is difficult and, for some people, impossible; yet only by looking with fresh, clear eyes can we see the significance of contemporary Soviet Ballet, as revealed here.

There is no such thing as " The Greatest Ballerina In The World " : there are a number of great dancers of ballerina rank in several countries, and the acknowledged leading one of each race or nation is she who most comprehensively and most continuously *creates* the characters she dances, probably in a wide variety of ballets. Differences of physique and nervous sensibility create vast differences between their performing styles: different methods of schooling and the occurrence or absence of opportunity to dance often enough to satisfy the performer's creative power and appetite will make significant contributions to her prowess as a ballerina. Of course, the spectator who confines his interest to one ballerina will never be able to measure her gifts accurately—however splendid she may be for him, he can



never fairly calculate whether she is a greater dancer than any other of the same rank.

Then again, there is only a small repertory of ballets known to and danced regularly by different ballerinas; and this is another factor working against the honest assessment of the talents of several ballerinas. An interest in the art of Ballet, an interest in the craft and mystique of dancing, encourage the spectator to watch different performers giving clearly different interpretations, allowing him to taste several kinds of aesthetic and emotional effect—provided the performances are danced and acted with complete sincerity and commitment.

All the ballerinas I can number at this moment vary in age (and therefore in experience, and in the quality and depth of their emotional projection on stage); some no longer dance certain roles they once performed, and many of them have not—and possibly never will—dance roles which others can create into splendid characterisations. All this is to suggest that comparisons between Ulanova, Struchkova and other Russian ballerinas, and their Western counterparts, is more or less meaningless. These Russians can produce a kind of effect we have rarely, if at all, met before: but then their attitude towards Ballet is completely different from that of Western dancers.

If this vast difference can be assessed and stated in a few words, it seems to be: in Russia, Ballet has been manipulated so that it is, within their culture, a major art, not a minor one as it has always been in Europe. Part of this process of re-thinking Ballet into a new shape has been the development of a style of dance-acting based on the discipline, close study of the role, and finely balanced team-work, that emanate from the Stanislavsky method of actor-training. In addition, their choreographers have analysed every second of the action (whether planned, as for a new ballet, or existing, as in an old ballet—*Swan Lake*, for instance). They have then ruthlessly trimmed, clarified, adjusted, or simplified it so that the continuous action of any phase of any ballet—whether five seconds or five minutes in length—never fails to open out the plot, reveal significant aspects of the characters, or in some way keep the spectators' attention rivetted on the continuous unfolding of the story. Without making any unjust comparisons with Western ballets, it is obvious that this concentration on keeping the ballet going as the unfolding of a meaningful story is something that the Russians can do consummately well.

Again, our development of Ballet for forty-odd years has been along the lines of Fokine's principles and we have been ensnared by, as well as legitimately fascinated by, the formula of the one-act, short ballet. We have made a kind of ballet which must necessarily have scenery, costumes, music, staging, and dance-style in key with the theme or idea or plot—which accounts for all the cleverness, the touches of genius, and the banality, repetitiveness and vulgarity, that one sees in so many works by Western choreographers today.

REVIEW

This only partly touches upon the big, basic differences between Soviet and non-Soviet balletmaking today; each side can find things to inspire, amaze or horrify it in the other's ballet system; and each has quite a lot to teach the other if only the right bridges between the two systems can be found and used. Neither can expect to be wholly successful with the spectators of the other system, because the systems themselves differ in being artistic expressions of two wholly different social structures. . . . Given an understanding that these differences do exist, we can accept and at the same time reject many things in these Bolshoi ballets.

The intense manner of dance-acting plus the fruits of that academic method they have been perfecting for over two hundred years, imbue the dancers with a sense of devotion to the act of performance that produces effortless, unstrained, fully extrovert dancing. The men mostly appear more muscular, more masculine than ours but lack their grace, delicacy and courtliness; they dance effortlessly with a greater range of movements which they execute with more fire, athleticism and passion than do Western dancers.

The naturalistic sets and costumes, which upset so many people, logically fit the Russian conception of decor as, literally, merely a background for the dancing—not a contributory factor to the atmosphere of the story.

No dancer appearing in any role, however small, failed to dance and act all-out—that is, sincerely but without obvious " showmanship ". After the ballerinas Ulanova, Struchkova, Karelskaya and Timofeyeva, one can only record the faultless characterisations and dance performances of the leading males in leading roles—Fadayechev as Albrecht and Siegfried; Kondratov as Vatslav in *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, Zhdanov, Koren and Rikhter in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Lapauri in *Romeo* and *Bakhchisarai*. Yuri Feier, chief conductor, gets more out of the scores than one had thought possible . . . and these notes are no more than a brief summary of the unusual, disquieting, satisfying, thrilling and always highly memorable sensations induced by the opening performances of each of these four Soviet ballets.

NEW ZEALAND

SPAIN

EGYPT

FRANCE

Right: *Martha Tsoukalas première danseuse of the Gorilovich Ensemble*

Left: *Poul Gnat and Gloria Young in* Sonata. *Photo*: *Keith Woods.*

NEW ZEALAND

TEN members of the New Zealand Ballet Company are at present on a four month tour of the Dominion. The programme consists of *Swan Lake Act II*, *Petrouchka*, *Sonata*, *Valse Triste* and *Popular Pastimes No.* 1. *Swan Lake* has been mounted by a new member of the company, Arthur Turnbull, and is very well presented. The première danseuse, Gloria Young, makes a noble and strong Odette and Poul Gnatt and Rodney Macdonald, who alternate as Siegfried, are excellent, Poul Gnatt in particular making one of the best Siegfrieds ever seen here. The pas de trois is included in Act II, and in spite of the revisions necessary for the small corps de ballet there is no lack of continuity.

Valse Triste (choreography Poul Gnatt, music Sibelius) was first performed in 1953 and is one of Poul Gnatt's best ballets. In the form of a dramatic pas de deux it is danced by Poul Gnatt and Rosalind Tong. A novel feature of the presentation is that both a musical prologue and a musical epilogue (two Romances by Sibelius) are used to heighten the tension of the ballet.

Popular Pastimes No. 1 is the first of a series of ballets based on the diversions of New Zealanders, in this case Fishing, and has music especially composed by the New Zealand Ballet Company's pianist Dorothea Franchi, and choreography by Poul Gnatt. A light trifle that is mainly notable for several new steps invented by Poul Gnatt, it has Gloria Young, Rosalind Tong, Rodney Macdonald and Arthur Turnbull in the principal roles.

Many of the country stages are very small and *Valse Triste* and *Sonata* are given as alternatives to *Petrouchka* when the stages are not suitable for this ballet. I have therefore seen it only once, and at this performance the principal parts were taken by Poul Gnatt (Petrouchka), Valerie Whyman (the Doll), Graeme Pickering (the Blackamoor) and Ian Walker (the Charlatan). I understand however that Poul Gnatt and Ian Walker are to exchange roles for some performances and that the part of the Doll will be shared by Valerie Whyman and Cecily Stuart. Even on a relatively good stage the production seemed cramped and it is not the type of ballet that is enthusiastically received by an unsophisticated audience, but it is a creditable and ambitious event when a small and young company can make even an average performance of such a ballet. All of the principal roles and that of the two street dancers (Jean Williams and Cecily Stuart), are quite satisfactorily performed, although Poul Gnatt, as is only to be expected, still commands the stage and gives a far better performance than his colleagues.

The Danish decor artist Borge Johansen has based the scenery on Benois' Copenhagen production and has achieved some striking sets that are faulted only by the stage and transport limitations. A surprising effect in this production is that the music, instrumentated and played by Dorothea Franchi, remains as forceful as ever, even though it is performed on a solo piano. **KEITH WOODS**

SPAIN

Translations have now been made and we quote extracts from the reviews of the Ballet Rambert's first two towns they visited on their recent Spanish tour. From Valencia July 25th " The English Company is showing again and again that none of the dancers are corps de ballet dancers, each one is a soloist. Their performances exceed all our expectations ". And from Vigo (July 30th) " Tonight the English Ballet were presented to the people of Vigo and enthusiastically received by people from every city in Europe who were lucky enough to see such a wonderful artistic ensemble. They were rewarded with great applause."

EGYPT

The Ballet season will be inaugurated by the Gorilovich Dance Ensemble, whose opening performance has been announced.

The Ensemble, consisting of 30 dancers and an orchestra of 20 musicians, will leave the Institute in Alexandria for a season in Cairo.

In 1936 Mme. Gorilovich—then a star in the Budapest Opera—left Hungary for Egypt, where she created the Classical Dance Institute in Alexandria, which now comprises 65 dancers who have given 40 shows. Recently I was present at one of their shows organised by the Alexandria Municipality, and I was greatly impressed by their performance. The Institute will do a season in Cairo next October.

Mme. Gorilovich belongs to a family of professional ballerinas. Fox Movietone recently filmed the Ensemble in Technicolor. Walt Disney was very much impressed by the interpretation of the Ballets, and sent Mme. Gorilovich a signed drawing as a token of appreciation.

WALENS

FRANCE

IT has been announced that negotiations are in progress between the French and Soviet Foreign Ministries, with a view to cultural exchanges between the Paris and Moscow Operas—exchanges in which the whole of both troupes would take part—but this could not happen before the end of May.

In the meantime *The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* (libretto by Gabriele d'Annunzio, music by Debussy) is being rehearsed at the Palais Garnier. Serge Lifar will direct the mimed part of this oratorio which will be danced by Mlle. Ludmilla Tcherina. The piece will be performed at the end of November, with settings by the painter Felix Labisse.

Next, Leonide Massine will present his *Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz) with Christian Berard's celebrated settings, at the Opéra; there is talk also of Georges Balanchine and Roland Petit being commissioned as choreographers, but nothing has been settled about this. Before next summer, the German choreographer Rosen is to present Jean Cocteau's ballet *L'Homme à la Licorne*.

News from

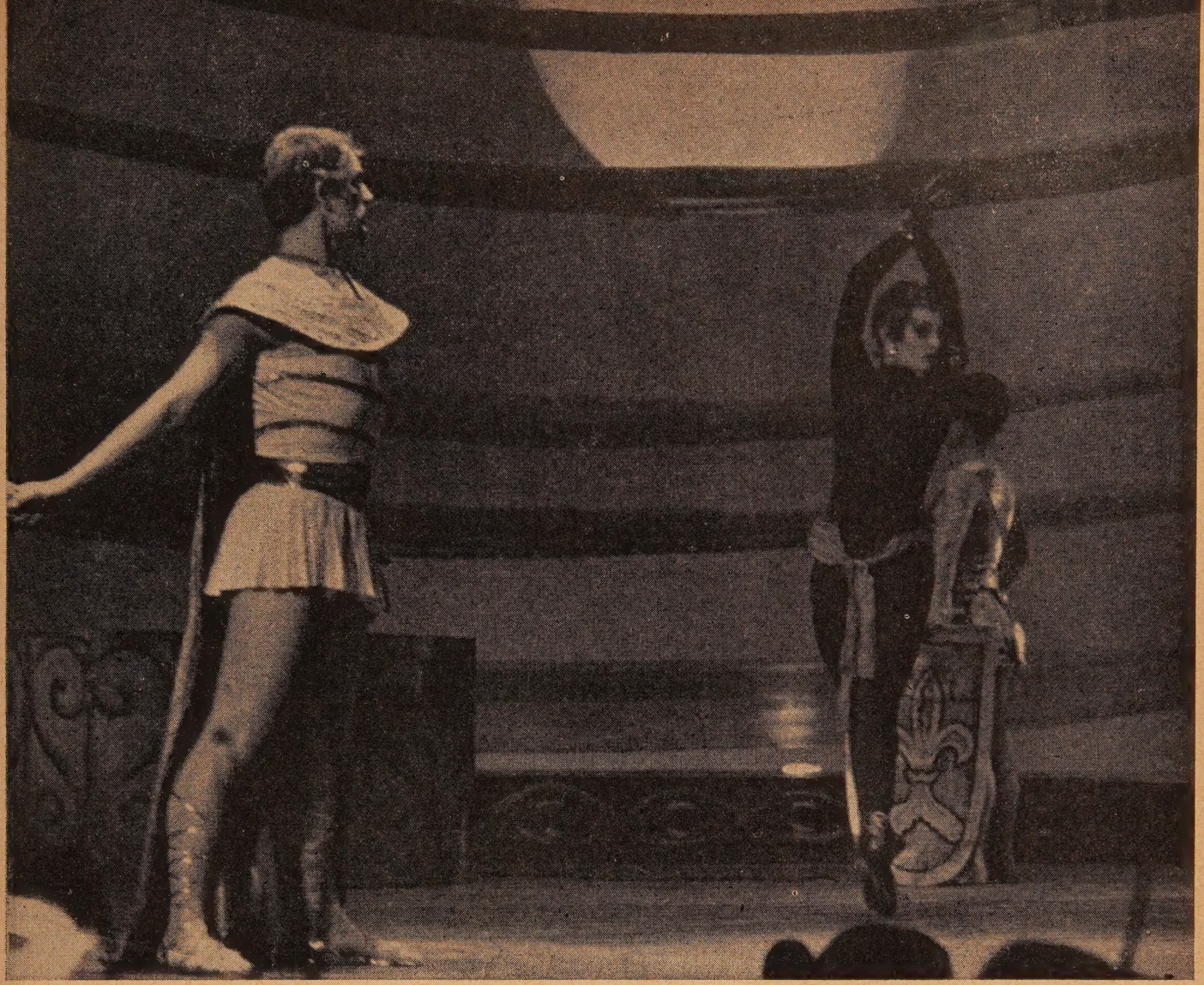
French choreographic criticism has suffered a grievous blow in the loss of Pierre Michaut, President of the Dance Writers' and Critics' Association, who died in Paris on 16th September, aged 62. Well known and esteemed in international ballet circles, Pierre Michaut devoted a number of works to dance and the ballet—including an important work on contemporary ballet. His funeral in Paris was attended by many personalities from the dance world and the Press.

Lycette Darsonval and her Ballet Company left France on 25th September for America, where a three months' tour awaits them. This great star of the Opéra will present her ballets in 56 towns, including New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Quebec, Montreal, Las Vegas, San Francisco and Toronto.

At the Casino Theatre in Enghien, the 56 Ballet Company directed by Irene Lidova and Milorad Miskovitch presented the show which was well received this summer at the Lyons Festival. The Company is small, in number, but the performers are interesting—Claire Sombert, Milorad Miskovitch, Tessa Beaumont, Milko Sparembleck, Vassili Sulich, Veronika Mlakar.

There are three ballets in the programme, of which the first is *The Seasons* (music by Glazunov, costumes by Lila de Nobili) and danced by Claire Sombert, Milorad Miskovitch, Tessa Beaumont and Milko Sparembleck, to choreography by Walter Gore—fresh and of a pleasing phantasy in the development of movement, forms and attitudes. A fine choreographic piece which one would like to see again.

The second ballet *The Ladder* (music by Zdenko Turjac, settings and costumes by François Ganeau, choreography by Dick Sanders)



the World

shows us three people—the wife (Tessa Beaumont) the husband (Vassili Sulich) and the stranger (Milko Sparembleck) in a sombre drama, an enigmatic " whodunit." One sees three versions of a suburban crime, according to each of the presumed murderers. Who did the killing? That is the mystery which the spectator may solve as he pleases. A frankly modern type of ballet employing expressionist idiom, it is interesting, if a little long, and it was well interpreted.

The third ballet *Prometheus* (Maurice Bèjart's choreography, music by Maurice Ohana, settings and costumes by Bernard Daydè) is one of the noblest of ballets for the grandeur of its subject, its conception and its realisation. The subject is worth describing. Prometheus has penetrated the abode of the gods to steal the spiritual spark and give it to the world and to human beings so that man may know himself.

He meets and overthrows the monster who protects the frontiers of the sacred world; he transmots the divine breath to Creation and animates the world, but like all prophets he is to have his tribulations and his violent death.

Maurice Bèjart is a likeable choreographer who gives us more and more surprises. His works have a sombre fire, both attractive and gripping. Everything in his *Prometheus* is valid, and treated with sober power. Milorad Miskovitch has a difficult role in the name part, but he plays it with profound and moving ardour; he lives the role with heart-rending intensity. Bernard Daydè's settings are unusual and striking.

The schemes for re-arrangement of the corps de ballet of the Thèatre National de l'Opèra, as given to the Press, have astonished both them and the public. Nina Vyroubova, who has been a star of the Opèra for seven years, has been dismissed by a letter from the Director. Two other stars, Micheline Bardin and Youli Algaroff, have suffered the same fate.

There are two sensational new engagements. As from to-day, (25th September) the Tallchief-Skibine partnership are part of the Opèra Company. Thus the star grouping of the great theatre is now:

Mlles. Chauvirè, Daydè, Tallchief, Vaussard, Lafon, Bessy.

MM. Renault, Van Dyck, Skibine, Bozzoni, Andreani.

In November Mlle. Lycette Darsonval will become Dance Director of the Opèra in place of Mr. Harald Lander, who has been dismissed.

Serge Lifar's contract as premier danseur has not been renewed, but he was to have remained with the Opera de Paris as Ballet-Master and Choreographer. However Serge Lifar has refused the contract which Mr. George Hirsch, Director of the Opèra, offered him as he thinks it unworthy of his past achievements. The great dancer and choreographer has offered his resignation and Mr. Hirsch has accepted it.

Also Mr. Serge Peretti, a former star of the same theatre has been removed from his place as Professor of the senior pupils' class—and so has, for practical purposes been shown the door.

Other startling changes are rumoured in this chain of dramatic events at the Opèra, and we will keep our readers informed as soon as official news is to hand.

Above: Colette Marchand and Milorad Miskovitch in Salome *choreography by Paul Szilard. This photograph was taken in Japan where with a group of American dancers they had toured the principal cities, and had also danced in Honolulu and the Philippine Islands.*

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET ANNUAL 1956-57

The first major book on the British Ballet Company now so widely acclaimed the world over

Contents include

- ★ **Articles by Sacheverell Sitwell, Anton Dolin, A. V. Coton, Rachel Cameron, Peter Williams, Sonia Roberts and other eminent writers**
- ★ **Full-Page photographic studies of leading members of the Company**
- ★ **Complete repertoire of the Company, in pictures and stories**
- ★ **The Company's triumphant overseas tours, featuring Monte Carlo, Bordeaux, Israel**
- ★ **Photography by Straker, Vivienne, Lido, Kovel, Ward, Wilson and others**
- ★ **The music and choreography of Festival Ballet, and how a Ballet is conceived and mounted**
- ★ **Life stories, with pictures, of Anton Dolin and John Gilpin**
- ★ **Profiles (portrait and story) of every member of the Company**
- ★ **Ballets in action**
- ★ **Guest artistes**
- ★ **Action studies**

"most lavishly produced book".—*Daily Telegraph*
"a handsome volume".—*London Evening News.*

Edited by A. GEORGE HALL

152 pages, art paper, 12 in. x 9 in.
Over 300 illustrations

Cloth bound 21s. net Boards 18s. net

from all booksellers

Published by:

GRAYS INN PRESS PUBLICATIONS
21 Shaftsbury Avenue, London, W.1.

HOW BALLET IS BORN

★

The Australian Theatre Ballet

Part 2

by

WALTER GORE

★

SO for the next few weeks our bus wheels rolled us along the hot and dusty gumtree roads. Up over the Great Dividing Range again and down through Ned Kelly Country to our next Hall or Institute, our next good or bad hotel with its cast iron verandahs and steel tipped mosquitoes. On again over wooden trestle bridges, past bottlebrush, billabongs, cockatoos and watchful kookaburras. From the banks of the snag-strewn Murray, brown and wide, to the edge of New South Wales we went until eventually and thankfully we reached the end of this our initial journey. We had covered a good few miles and had learned a thing or two which now were going to be put to a sterner test in a City Theatre.

ADELAIDE

In preparing for this our first important season, the hours were full and long. Night conference followed rehearsal and no sooner was one in bed, or so it seemed, than rehearsal time was come again. But it was wonderfully stimulating—even my broken ribs seemed painless and unimportant. All that interested or mattered was the work in hand. Certainly it was harassing at times with so much to do, but we went slap bang into it with a gay conviction that success would be ours: I couldn't tell you why we believed this—we were just happy I guess.

At last the day came for the train ride to Adelaide, and as the Overland dieseled its streamlined shape out of Spencer Street we laughed and carried on a treat. In true theatrical fashion we were given the worst and only non-streamlined non-heated coach on the train, but we didn't mind overmuch for we were on our way.

I think very few of us slept that night. Not because it was cold, which may surprise those who don't know Australia, but because we were excited. Even the morose looking conductor couldn't forbear to smile as he made up the beds. He was offered a grape here, an orange there, a piece of chocolate, a drink of pop, a cigarette, a banana—even a piece of mum's cake.

The laughter and chatter died away as it was breaking dawn and then with the 6 o'clock tea and biscuit it began again.

It was still cold and early when we stepped out onto Adelaide platform to face the reporters' pencils and flash bulbs plus the luxury of a fleet of Holdens to glide us and our baggage to the theatre—and what perfect organisation met us there. All was ready and waiting. Like Aladdin's lamp all one had to do was wish.

My oath but this was a change for the better, a big step in the right direction. Under conditions like these we couldn't fail. If we did we deserved the ash heap, for here was the best kind of professional approach for our purpose. Quiet, efficient, co-operative and sympathetic to a degree. Not too big for our present size and not too small either. No trouble was too great, no question remained unanswered and the word " impossible " just wasn't in their repertoire. The success we achieved there was due in no small measure to that theatre, which would be a feather in any city's cap, and to our jewel of a Stage Director who we had but recently come by: but what really shook me was the way the dancers suddenly blossomed as a company. When the curtain went up for the first night, for one second I held my breath and then let it go—with delight.

I can't tell you what it was like, you should have been there with us. It was remarkable and like a dream come true. Not a hitch,

not a tremor. This was what I had hoped for: that once they set foot on a stage proper something would happen to them—and it did. They rose to the occasion like trout to a fly.

If they could dance like this in seven short months from the first rehearsal day what could they not achieve in another seven months under proper theatre conditions?

The morning and evening papers rated us a high success:

" Adelaide should salute this company . . . will be a major force in theatre ballet . . . looks like being one of the best things that have happened to Australian ballet for a long time . . ." and so on.

Naturally we were elated at such an auspicious beginning but we realised full well it *was* only a beginning. We knew the difficulties of survival facing us in the Australian theatre jungle, which is quite different from its English counterpart, but we believed Lady Fate shared our own beliefs in ourselves. As it turned out she gave us Nelson's Eye, but luckily for our peace of mind we didn't know this as we danced our way through cheering evenings to even a financial success.

RETURN TO MELBOURNE

So then at season's end one rainy Sunday, we returned to our home town of Melbourne and the University Theatre. Again success was ours with a repeat season to follow almost at once, but now we began to run up against the inevitable—shortage of stages.

As any Australian who earns his living on the stage there can tell you, there just aren't enough " free " theatres to go round. The Big Two, who between them control Australian theatre, have their own set policies one of which sponsors its own long established ballet company, so anyone starting a new independent venture, as we were, is immediately thrust between the crackers of get in or get out. In other words get in with one of the Big Two or get out—into the Bush.

There was, however, one alternative which we hoped would see us through our first year of life; the small theatres, like ourselves, independent of outside control; theatres like the one in Adelaide and the University Theatre in Melbourne, but—by reason of their being " free "—they were so heavily booked by amateur and professional bodies alike for sometimes as much as two years ahead, that try as we may from the Arrow right down to the last Church hall we just could not secure a continuous run of performances.

HEARTBREAK

This was a vital necessity for how else could we survive financially? We make money on one week and pay it all away keeping the company together until the next series of performances. Not only is this bad financially it is bad artistically, for although dancers have to eat they also have to dance otherwise they dry up. Our good Press, the interest we'd aroused, the full houses—none of this could find us a stage.

It was heartbreaking.

Here we were now ready physically and mentally to tackle our first classic and the works of Ashton, Tudor, Howard, Bates and Priest—all this was in mind, and much more, for the next six months—but we had to find a stage on which to dance them.

As we searched every hole and corner, the company hung on in ice factories, penicillin factories, wine cellars, offices and cinemas, waiting for a happy result. Classes of course continued in the evenings but soon we had to accept that it was The Bush—or nothing.

FINAL DECISION

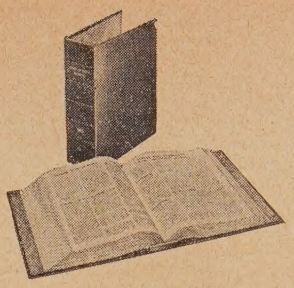
Now I had vividly in mind the recently acquired knowledge of these conditions, and I knew many people who had given up the stage rather than return to them. I had in mind the sad results of such tours in England: and I had also in mind the words of a world-famous director after weeks of one night stands under infinitely better conditions than we could ever hope to experience. The words were " Never again "—because the damage to morale and production values was such that it took six months to repair: and this mark you with an experienced and mature company.

It was a momentous decision to make and one not to be arrived at lightly. Perhaps it may be thought I decided wrongly for a quick death instead of a slow one but I don't think so, and I am not alone in this thought by a long way. We were not a box of performing fleas, we were a company of dancers who needed genuine theatre conditions however small, if we were to survive let alone progress. One can compromise to an extent but a compromise which cuts your throat isn't much use to anyone really, except the Joe Toads of this world.

Many personal things, which have no place in this present account of our all too brief life, left me bitter and disillusioned when the great axe fell but today, with time between, those feelings are largely gone. Shaw said it so well through the mouth of the Dauphin:

" It always comes back to the same thing. She is always right; and everyone else is wrong . . . If only she'd keep quiet—or go home!"

Time proved Joan—and when you know you are right, Time is your only cushion. Nothing else.



BALLET TODAY binders will be ready soon.

Last year we were sold out long before Christmas, so will you please

MAKE YOUR RESERVATION NOW

The binder holds 24 copies of the magazine, each copy secured by thin wire, opens flat at any page, and copies can easily be removed at will. The spine is marked in gold blocking—*BALLET TODAY*

This binder will make a handsome Christmas present at small cost, and if you wish to spend a little more money on your friends you can include a subscription for them, either for six months or a year, commencing any date you like.

Alternatively, we will bind in any back copies you may care to select dating from March 1954 to June 1956 at the special price of 6d. per copy whilst stocks last.*

Please reserve:

.....binders at 11/6d.

.....6-months subscription at 8/9d. commencing.....

.....1-year „ at 17/6d. „ .....

.....back copies at 6d. per copy—give months required

.....

Cheque enclosed £ : s. d.

I will send payment later.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

If to be sent to a friend please give name and address below:—

Name .....

Address .....

.....

* This special offer applies only to the months stated, and back copies at reduced rates are available only when purchasing the binder.

CAREERS IN PICTURES

Next month's issue will feature Belinda Wright of Festival Ballet, and her husband Wolfgang Brunner will also appear on our choreographer's page—How a Ballet is born. There is bound to be a big demand for this double feature. Please, therefore, do not rely upon picking up your copy of Ballet Today—your newsagent only orders what he thinks he can sell.

Give your newsagent or bookstall a firm order each month—and you will not be disappointed. In case of difficulty write to us:

Ballet Today, 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

A subscription form is printed on another page.

This has not prevented its becoming a very popular item in many a ballet-repertoire elsewhere. Several versions have been launched by different choreographers. Alan Carter made one for Munich soon after his installation there, and it was received with the usual intelligent commentary by the art-loving Bavarians, who are exceptionally open to foreign ideas. Alfred Rodrigues' effort was one of the most keenly anticipated novelties of this year's Edinburgh Festival.

Why, then, all the pother it has aroused?

" Granted, the theme is unpleasant," said Mr. Rodrigues, " but who can deny that such things exist? At a dress rehearsal we happened to have a Catholic priest from Spain looking on. Far from being shocked, he remarked at the end that anyone who fancies this is not true to life just has no conception of what goes on in the underworld of any Urban Community.

" After all," Mr. Rodrigues continued, " we are all human—a mixture of both evil and good, actuated by an untold multitude of subconscious impulses. War, let us face it, releases the relentless drive that is natural to all in the flood-tide of youth, and the circumstances render legitimate much that on sober reflection would be condemned. But the cessation of war does not necessarily, or even probably, alter human nature; every relaxation of orderly routine brings depravity in its wake. Bartok, composing *The Miraculous Mandarin*, had the picture of the post-war world following the 1914 conflagration in his mind; Bertold Brecht, using a different medium, depicted similar conditions produced by the Thirty Years' War in the 17th century. And these conditions are equally typical of our own post-war period.

" Facing this fact, however, does not mean that one must make the reflection of it an obnoxious spectacle. The only excuse for ' holding the mirror ' at all should be to point a moral. In my treatment of *The Miraculous Mandarin* I took the utmost care to make the Seductress a purely classical dancer, because I was convinced that if I turned her into an actress-character-dancer, the theme really would have been rendered objectionable. Balletic treatment, to my mind, lifts the action to an abstract plane, without diminishing either its effectiveness or its message.

" But one must be honest. That, I believe, is the touch-stone of all true art. It is not enough to ' follow a line ' which has proved superficially successful. One must go back to nature every time, make one's own observations from life itself, and faithfully reproduce one's own direct impressions. I loathe ' chi-chi ' in ballet. Only the truth—even if it is not pretty—will serve."

" Perhaps this is in some way related to your personal background?" I asked.

" Precisely," replied Mr. Rodrigues. " You see, I am a South African, of mixed Portugese and Dutch ancestry, so the Catholic and the Calvinist are constantly at war within me!

Adverse criticism of Alfred Rodrigues' " The Miraculous Mandarin " has left the choreographer somewhat perplexed but unrepentant. In this exclusive Ballet Today interview he gives his reasons

THE work has had an eventful history. Its score, composed by Bela Bartok to a script specially written by Menyhert Lengyel, was conceived as a ballet from the start. Bartok wrote only two ballets and this is one of them. It is therefore a close-knit piece of work with a definite pattern, and not merely an adaptation strung together from various bits and pieces to suit the needs of a group of dancers, as so many ballet-scores are. In Hungary, its land of origin, the work produced such a violent reaction that it was strangled at birth, its performance as a visual entertainment being banned altogether.

" Anyone who attempts the choreography of *The Miraculous Mandarin*," continued Mr. Rodrigues, " has to submit to certain conditions. By the terms of Bela Bartok's testament, one is not allowed to alter a line of the music, and since the music was written to a definite libretto, one can take no liberties with the theme. I had been fascinated by the work for years and longed to express the impact it made upon me; but in my heart I knew that I had to *feel* it before I could express it. And because I have been true to my own feelings, I do not experience any sense of guilt or shame. A thing is only obnoxious when it is false."

Interviewed by

ELISABETHE CORATHIEL

Left: Scene from The Miraculous Mandarin *showing Elaine Fifield as the Girl, Michael Somes as the Mandarin, Alexander Grant as the Pimp, and Ray Powell and Pirmin Trecu as the Hoodlums. The girl lures her victims into a room where they are robbed and beaten up by her associates. The Mandarin is immune to death until his passion for the girl is fulfilled, at last when she is compassionate of his sufferings his wounds begin to bleed, and death comes upon him.*

Photo: Houston Rogers

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA

2

SVETLANA

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA has been a fully-fledged dancer for the past nine years, but her approach to her art is the same to-day as it was when she first began " to better each performance, to improve on interpretation and technique, and to hope that in years to come one may even *begin* to give a performance that is satisfying to oneself ". These are her own words, and sum up what those around her know to be true, she is, perhaps more than any other artist, dedicated to her work.

Svetlana has a talent for friendship, and the serious side of her nature is reflected in the fact that she numbers amongst her closest friends many young painters and intellectuals. Religion is also a very real part of her life, and she loves reading books on philosophy, and in fact can read them in many different languages.

Her Knightsbridge flat, which she shares with her father and mother, is always a home from home for dancers passing through London, and here also one encounters cousins, uncles and other relatives who are always dropping in.

Dancers naturally recall with pleasure the countries where audiences have shown the greatest enthusiasm, and Svetlana votes for England and America in this respect, but she has also danced with great success in Canada, France, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden and Norway.

Svetlana has no favourite role, but her preference is for the classical ballets. At the very outset of her career, when she joined Metropolitan Ballet, she had two ballets specially created for her. One was John Taras' famous *Design for Strings*, the other *Fanciulla delle Rose* by Frank Staff. She remembers with great affection her earliest starring roles, with Erik Bruhn as her partner, and has also danced with Michael Somes, David Blair, Frank Chauffres, Philip Chatfield, John Field and several other excellent young dancers.

The Beriosoff's have a home in New York and another in the South of France, and when her engagements permit Svetlana enjoys the open-air life, is a good swimmer, and likes walking with her pet poodle Cliquot.

Photos: *Page* 11 *in Giselle*
Page 12 *in Firebird, Ballet Imperial, Orpheus*
Page 13 *in Rinaldo and Armida, The Shadow*
Photos Nos. (1), (2), (4) *by Houston Rogers* (3) *by J. Winser* (5) *and* (6) *by Mike Davis.*

3

4

BERIOSOVA

Roles danced:

Princess Aurora The Lilac Fairy
in Sleeping Beauty

Odette-Odile in Swan Lake

Sylvia

Prelude Mazurka Pas de Deux
in Les Sylphides

Armida
in Rinaldo and Armida

Romantic Love in The Shadow

The Young Wife in Don Juan

Swanilda in Coppelia

The Black Girl in Ballet Imperial

La Favorita in Veneziana

Giselle

La Capricciosa
in The Lady and the Fool

Queen of the Waters
in Homage to the Queen

The Tsarevna in The Firebird

Fairy Winter in Cinderella

Design for Strings

Fanciulla delle Rose

Birthday Offering

5

6

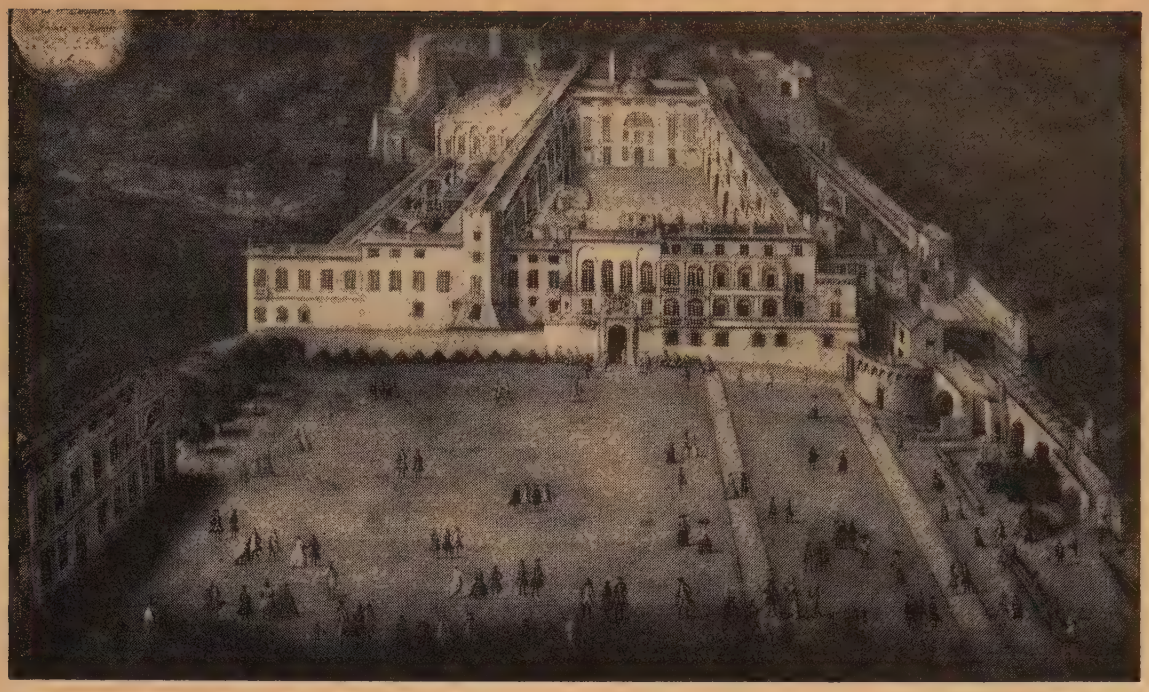
Photographs:

Top left: A charming snapshot of Svetlana Beriosova taken in Monte Carlo.

Bottom left: On holiday in Italy.

Top right: Taken in Svetlana's Knightsbridge flat, with one of the original paintings which she collects in the background. Seen here are Nicholas Beriosoff (Svetlana's father), Svetlana, her mother and cousin, and the poodle Cliquot.

Below: When the Sadler's Wells Ballet go abroad everyone wants to entertain the ballerinas. Here Svetlana is seen enjoying herself at a party in New York.



XVII CENTURY BALLET IN MONACO

By J. R. FARRINGTON

IN the Courts of France and Italy in the XVII Century, Ballet provided the most popular medium for the lavish entertainments which the rulers delighted in offering to courtiers and nobility. It was perhaps in the French Court at Versailles that the art reached its highest expression, though certain of the Italian rulers yielded little even to the Sun King himself in luxurious production and fanciful conception.

In a period when it was customary for all parts to be performed by members of the ruling house and courtiers, the form of ballet was, of course, vastly different from the modern production. Themes were generally drawn from classical mythology. Professional ballet masters, choreographers and musicians were employed, though often talented courtiers undertook this work. Productions were of interminable length with an incredible number of scenes, time and expense being of no account.

It is now three hundred years since the tiny Court of Monaco attained an eminence and distinction in ballet production that rivalled the Versailles of the young Louis XIV. The ruling Prince, Honoré II, whose long reign was perhaps the most brilliant in the ancient story of the Grimaldi, was not only an astute diplomat but also a man of wide culture with an instinct for luxury. Considerations of finance were secondary; large sums were expended in improving the Palace of Monaco, in forming an art collection and in entertaining visiting Princes and the local nobility.

The Prince received every encouragement from his daughter in law, the gay and ebullient Aurelia Spinola. Educated at the French Court she had no intention of settling quietly into the hitherto somewhat humdrum life at the Court of Monaco. The ageing Honoré seems to have fallen completely under her spell and placed no limit upon her extravagance.

In 1654 and 1655 two ballets of exceptional magnificence were produced. Fortunately records of these ballets still remain in the Palace archives. Aurelia, now widowed and created Duchess of Valentinois, had encouraged talent among the Court. Francesco Gropallo, organist to the Prince, composed the music; Orazio Ferrari, Court painter, undertook the décor; the scholarly Charles de Ferriol, secretary, drew upon his wide knowledge of mythology for the themes and Fulvio Frigoni, Court official, was nominated director. A professional "maître de danse", de Pagan, had been engaged for choreography and instruction of the dancers. All were stimulated and enthused by the indefatigable Aurelia.

An amusing letter written by de Pagan still exists. The maître ruefully complains that the legs of his male pupils—officers of the garrison and local gentry—were better adapted to swordsmanship than to tread a measure. But by using simple airs these difficult legs could be trained to dance passably well.

On 12th February 1654 the ballet *Les Entretiens de Diane et d'Apollon* was staged. The cast included Aurelia as Diane, her 12 year old son, later Louis I, as Apollon and her 10 year old daughter as Daphne. A host of mythological characters supported them, with shepherds, shepherdesses, satyrs, cooks, ruffians and even a pack of hounds.

The ballet opens in the palace of Diane, near a wood, as the goddess is going hunting with her nymphs. Satyrs are chased from the wood and begin to molest a simple shepherdess. Shepherds arrive and rescue her, leading to a gay dance of joy. Apollon, seeking Daphne, meets nymphs returning from the chase with game. Thus informed of the absence of Diane he intensifies his courtship of the unwilling Daphne, who flees to the wood for refuge. Apollon calls upon Venus to aid him. Comic interlude is the dance of the cooks preparing game for the feast for Diane on her return. Later the goddess, heated by the chase, is disrobed by her nymphs to bathe in a pool. Acteon is discovered in hiding in the rôle of "peeping Tom". Changed into a stag he is destroyed by the hounds. The feast now follows, Diane forgiving Apollon for his pursuit of Daphne and approving the marriage of her nymph Arethuse with Alphée. Bacchus, Hymen and Momus, overcome by wine, dance grotesquely to the general amusement. The finale is the wedding of Arethuse and Alphée.

Verses had been prepared to introduce each scene, but de Pagan secured the omission of these somewhat tedious effusions.

Spurred by success, in 1655 Aurelia organized the production of a ballet in three acts, with 16, 12 and 13 scenes. Known as *Le Vittorie de Minerva o vero la Virtu trionfante de Vitii*, it was designed to show the victory of Virtue over the many vices to which humans are subject. No expense or trouble were spared, costumes being made at Aix.

Jupiter, surrounded by cloud, dances a solemn measure to express his sufferings from a severe headache. Vulcan, with three cyclops, appear armed with heavy hammers. Sympathising with the suffering god Vulcan adopts the somewhat unusual cure of striking him a hammer blow on the head. From the cloud appears Minerva, played by Aurelia, regally attired and blazing with jewels. She is led to a throne, surrounded by the cardinal Virtues. A series of dances, expressive of virtue and innocence, are danced before the goddess.

Minerva, accompanied by Aurore and the three Graces, visits Rhodes and Athens. The people implore her aid against the serpent Egide, which is devastating the country. In a sombre forest Minerva slays the serpent but is then attacked by three giants, signifying Pride. Aided by light from Aurore Minerva overcomes the giants.

Another bathing scene is now introduced, in which Minerva is seen displaying her charms in the fountain of Hippocrene. Thirésias comes to spy upon her and mocks the goddess. He is turned into a woman. Jupiter, Vulcan, Aurore and the three Graces dance in honour of

Continued on page 18)

At the Theatres By MONTAGUE CALMAN

Some time ago I read of a man who was so fond of suet puddings he ate them daily. And such was his love for these stodgy blobs of grease that they were his only food.

In ballet there are many whose theatrical diet is equally unbalanced. And for those it is not the calories but the cultural distortion we need worry about.

Only variety and endless seeking for fresh ideas and outlets can make us bright and alive enough to appreciate both old and new. It is not coincidence that many ballet-goers suffer from a peculiar form of indigestion—lack of discrimination.

So I welcomed two recent visitors to London. Both had certain qualities in common. Antonio raised the flamenco dance from the social sneers of gypsy gavoting, and Ram Gopal lifted Indian dancing from the indictment of its lowly prostitute entertainment level.

ANTONIO PACKS THE PALACE

Like Charles Chaplin Antonio believes in being the All-Rounder. And at the Palace Theatre he was director, star, controller of lighting, designer of some of the costumes, and composer. Antonio the composer uses his real name for the credit titles on the scores—A. Ruiz. There were five works from his pen—*El Matinete*, *Near The Guadalquivir*, *Taranto*, and *Por Miarbra*. This last piece belongs to an old group of Flamenco songs, *Cante Grande*. In the actual performance dancer Antonio was well matched by the passionate flamenco accompaniment of Pepe Fuentes.

Antonio introduces a new ballet to London *Fantasia Galeicia*, first seen in New York. Hallfter's music is based on certain Galician folk songs. To me there is something decidedly Scottish about some of these airs, and I half expected the swirl of bagpipes to interrupt the chattering castanets.

Another new work *Pas De Quatre* used the music of some of Spain's eighteenth century composers—sonatas by Mateo Albeniz, Mateo Gallos and Narciso Casanovas, and a rondo by Felipe Rodriguez. Musically edited by Pablo Sorozabal these themes captured the courtly elegance of the nobleman's dream of past Spanish grandeur.

The refreshing novelty in both these works was the absence of the pulsating beat of the heel, and the toe taps. In *Fantasia Galeicia* the two principal dancers—Antonio and Segovia—were barefooted, while in the *Pas De Quatre* the girls danced on point.

TWO GREAT WORKERS

If Andalusian born Antonio has done much for the Spanish dance another Andalusian did even more. Manuel de Falla, who died in 1946, was born in Andalusia and spent much of his time delving into local gypsy music. He was also passionately fond of their folk dancing. And from this love he created a composition—*El Amor Brujo*. And even among musical morons there can be few who have not heard the *Ritual Fire Dance* music from this work.

Yet the popularity of this music has not made the synopsis of this ballet easier to fathom. There is much of it far too complicated to express choreographically—or so it seems. But with all its meanderings Antonio's presentation was colourful and at times dramatically exciting.

As on an earlier occasion the orchestra at the Palace Theatre left a taste not unlike garlic on the musical palate. And Angel Curras conducting was peculiarly insensitive to the charming castanets he was supposed to be accompanying.

INDIAN CHARMERS

During the fortnight's programme at the Royal Festival Hall, Ram Gopal gave one full length ballet—*The Legend of the Taj Mahal*. Obviously the restricted medium of Indian dance movements hampered the smooth unfolding of this romantic tale. And towards the end the interest waned.

Gopal's music director Rajani Lakhia composed some charming pieces for the ballet. He has woven a captivating musical carpet from the yarns of classical Ragas and Hindu melodies.

To my Western ears the simple repetitive melodies of Indian music have a slightly hypnotic attraction. As continuous as the laps of waves on the sea front it is as fascinating as a natural seashore symphony.

Many of the musical instruments used by the musicians go back many thousands of years. The *Veena*, a large fretted stringed instrument is over two thousand years old. For name collectors the other music makers used during the fortnight included the *Sarody*, *Shahnai*, and *Sitar*. While the drums have such colourful names as *Chanda*, *Khol*, *Manipuri*, and *Mridangham*.

A TOAST TO BOTH

In the entertainments presented by Gopal and Antonio we had a fresh egg fillip to our often heavy but no doubt nourishing balletic diet. I could not take either the Spanish savagery or the Indian dances daily but in small doses from time to time they are tonics.

Left: *Ram Gopal and Shevanti in* The Legend of the Taj Mahal *Exclusive Ballet Today photograph by Mike Davis.*
Below: *Antonio and Rosita Segovia in* El Amor Brujo *photo Gyenes.*
Opposite page: *Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes in* The Sleeping Beauty.

Music

Review

New Recordings By BEDFORD CROWLE

SLEEPING BEAUTY (*Tchaikovsky*). *Royal Opera House Orchestra* (*Irving*). *HMV. CLP* 1073-4.

Robert Irving is to be heartily congratulated on this very full account of Tchaikovsky's masterpiece. The orchestra's playing is criticised at times but here he handles everything so expertly that when the curtain falls, one is left with a feeling of exhilaration and intense pleasure. All the most important items are covered though individual choice will differ here and there. A recording of this length and calibre has long been awaited and now we have only to sit back and enjoy it.

DIVERTIMENTO No. 15 (*Mozart*). *Members of the Vienna Octet. Decca LXT* 5112.

Caracole is a typical Balanchine ballet—abstract and essentially classical in feeling. Criticism is sometimes made that his work is inclined to be repetitive but there is much more to this ballet and your interest increases each time you see it. Of course this heavenly music of Mozart's, with its entrancing Adagio holds your attention willy nilly and particularly when it is played with such elegance. I sincerely recommend that you get this disc—the recording is excellent.

LOVE THE MAGICIAN (*Falla*). *M. de Gabarain* (*contralto*), *Suisse Romande Orchestra* (*Ansermet*). *Decca LX* 3151.

Miss Gabarain is perhaps not fiery enough if you wish to be hypercritical, but there is no question that her contribution to this excellent record is very fine. In fact worthy of Ansermet and his orchestra, whose direction, playing and co-ordination are superlative—and all this perfectly recorded! I hope that one day Decca will give it to us on one side of a 12-inch disc.

SYMPHONY No. 3 (*Beethoven*). *Philharmonia Orchestra* (*Klemperer*) *Columbia* 33 *CX* 1346.

The balletic aspect of such a record as this, must, by common consent, take second place. As we know, the Funeral March constituted the score of Lifar's *A la Memoire d'un Héros* and what a magnificent rendering it and all the other movements are given. This is certainly Beethoven of the highest order, and beautifully recorded. Klemperer seems to have got into the very heart of the work, quite simply but nevertheless in the grand manner.

NOCTURNE No. 6, IMPROMPTU No. 5 *and* VALSE-CAPRICE No. 3 (*Fauré*). HUMORESKE (*Schumann*). *Grant Johannesen* (*piano*). *HMV CLP* 1069.

In certain moods, there is nothing more satisfying than the piano works of Fauré. How well one realises this when watching Andrée Howard's delicately wrought ballet, *La Fête Etrange*. The nocturne brings the ballet to a close and Johannesen plays it and the other two works with sensitivity and understanding. Schumann's *Humoreske* may not be considered quite so successful—it is exceptionally difficult to interpret. Recording good.

RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI (*Rachmaninov*). *B. Moiseiwitsch* (*piano*), *Philharmonia Orchestra* (*Rignold*). BARCAROLLE OP. 60, NOCTURNE OP. 62 *and* BALLADE OP. 52 (*Chopin*). *B. Moiseiwitsch* (*piano*). *HMV. CLP* 1072.

This may not be the complete answer in respect of the Rhapsody—the orchestral reading of the score could be improved and the recording of the piano is slightly too forward but Moiseiwitsch, who was a personal friend of the composer, is acknowledged as an authoritative interpreter and gives us the necessary poetic approach. Many of the younger pianists seem to be oblivious to the fact that Rachmaninov was a romantic—Julius Katchen for instance. Moiseiwitsch's Chopin you will also enjoy and the piano tone is good.

From a London disc, *DTL* 93084, which includes interesting and less well-known Prokofiev that is worth tasting, we have a sound performance of the *Overture on Hebrew Themes* under Jouve. Skibine choreographed this for his ballet, *The Return*, first seen in November 1954. Of equal interest in fact not to be missed, is *Le Loup*, *DTL* 93086, which Dutilleux composed specially for Roland Petit. It was good to see Petit and Verdy in this ballet again during their brief summer visit. And on to *Winter Night*, Gore's emotional ballet to Rachmaninov's *Second Piano Concerto*. We get an excellent recording of the young Russian pianist, Malinin—*Columbia* 33 *CX* 1369—but where is the intensity of feeling? Here is another pianist who is apparently unaware that this composer is a romantic and not simply an electronic calculating machine. *Philips NBL* 5032 would seem a bargain, *Firebird Suite* and *The Rite of Spring* together, but unfortunately you will not want to hear it more than once—Ansermet and Markevitch are the ones to go for.

Music of the Ballet on LP

played by

THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE ORCHESTRA, COVENT GARDEN

conducted by

ROBERT IRVING

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

CLP1073-4

COPPÉLIA

CLP1046

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET SILVER JUBILEE

CLP1070

GISELLE

DLP1004

"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

LONG PLAY 33⅓ r.p.m. RECORDS

THE GRAMOPHONE CO. LTD. (RECORD DIVISION) 8-11 GT. CASTLE ST., LONDON, W.1.

XVII Century Ballet in Monaco

(*Continued from page 15*)

female virtue.

Before a temple Minerva repulses the advances of Pallante, who loves her for her physical beauty and is not appreciative of her soul. This victory over sensuality is celebrated by dances by the Virtues. Pallas, daughter of Triton, jealous of Minerva, appears with two monsters with monkey faces, Ambition and Arrogance. They are chased away by the Virtues and Minerva blinds Pallas with the rays from her shield.

In a hideous cavern, filled with smoke, Pluton and the Furies rage at the victories of Minerva over the vices inspired by them.

The finale is in the palace of Minerva where she dances in joy for her many triumphs. Jupiter, with all the virtuous members of the cast, appear in a series of dances to honour Minerva.

It is unfortunate that no trace of the music composed by Gropallo for these ballets can be found. Further, little is known of the actual choreography. With no trained corps de ballet it is probable that de Pagan relied largely on simple movements of a large and brilliantly costumed cast. The sufferings of the male performers, enduring the training of their " difficult legs " under the critical eye of the Duchess of Valentinois can best be left to the imagination.

Today the Principality of Monaco is again a home of Ballet. Much is due to Diaghileff and his Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, the association of the master with this fairylike little State focussing the attention of the Ballet world upon Monte Carlo. The high traditions of the Art are fully maintained by the excellence of the winter Ballet seasons in which London Festival play so great a part. The youth and élan of this company have endeared it to international balletomanes.

Finally, Ballet has received immense encouragement from the present Sovereign Prince, Rainier III. The young ruler is a genuine enthusiast, unmistakably shown by the magnificent ballet performances arranged by him for the entertainment of his guests and subjects on the occasion of his recent marriage. Patronized with real appreciation and sincerity by the princely couple the future of Ballet in Monte Carlo seems assured.

The photograph of the Palace at Monte Carlo (page 15) is from a print made in 1732, and shews the Palace as it was after the alterations done by Honoré II. *Photo by G. Detaille & Fils*

BURNETS

Established 1832

for
THEATRICAL FABRICS
and
ACCESSORIES

—★—

Elastic Fish-Net TIGHTS
and OPERA HOSE
Cotton or Wool TIGHTS
LEOTARDS, GLOVES
BELTS etc.

—★—

STAGE CURTAINS
made to order
Curtain Tracks Supplied

Price list on application

B. BURNET & Co. Ltd.

22 *GARRICK STREET LONDON W.C.2*

Tel. TEMple Bar 3972 & 4893

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

There seems to be a campaign to deglamorise all ballet-dancers. "There's *nothing* glamorous in the life of a dancer," these people declare. "It's all hard work." Well, is it? Far be it from me to minimise the extremely hard work in ballet training (I've had a daughter at the Wells, and believe me, I *know*!), but surely there is a little bit of glamour at the end as a reward for all this toil, sweat, and tears? If there were not, what dancer would work "harder than any navvy" as I said in one of my books, for so little financial reward!

If you can go by Mr. Haskell and Miss Capon, a ballet-dancer's career is as dull as the washing-up water. Poor Margot Fonteyn must be nearly dead with boredom, leading so humdrum a life. She migth as well be a clerk in a solicitor's office! When I watched Miss Capon's "Dancers of Tomorrow" on TV I waited patiently, like many other viewers, for all this hard work to result in at least one beautiful *pas de deux*. But no! Evidently the hard work is a reward in itself, and there is nothing at the end as a reward—just an endless succession of *plies* and *battements*. Well, it's just not true, and it's time someone debunked the debunkers' You have only to read the lives of famous dancers (present as well as past) to see how very untrue it is. They work extremely hard, yes, but they certaioly get more than their share of glamour and excitement at the end. They fly to distant lands; they lie on sunny Mediterranean beaches between rehearsals; they practise on the roofs of famous opera-houses. People drink wine out of their ballet-shoes; pelt them with flowers; mob them for autographs; write poetry about them. You can read all this in Mr. Haskell's own books (and those of others), and if this isn't glamour, then what *is*? I think Mr. Haskell ought to re-read some of his own books, and recapture the glamour.

The Soviet ballet (not only the prima ballerina, but the corps) arrived yesterday in three great jet airliners, to dance in an opera-house packed from floor to ceiling by balletomanes, who have queued for days (and during the night too!) for seats. How about this for glamour? Our own Sadler's Wells Ballet flew to the U.S.A., dressed by our most famous dress-houses, to act as "ambassadors for the United Kingdom". And quite right too! Who could possibly be more suitable? But could anyone say that this is not a glamorous profession?

Even the youngest and newest member of the *corps de ballet* gets her share of glamour, even if it is only a sprinkling of stardust from Margot Fonteyn's shoes, or a flower dropped from the great ballerinas, bouquet as she takes a "curtain". And why should it be otherwise? Our dancers are not domestic science students, as Pigeon Crowle so admirably puts it, but artists in the making. They belong to a glamorous (if arduous) profession. Good luck to them, I say! May they have lots and lots of glamour!

Lorna Hill—writer of glamorous ballet-books, and mother of one of the poor, dull dancers!

Lorna Hill is the author of many Juvenile novels on the ballet—notably The Sadler's Wells *series—which have enjoyed an immense sale for many years.* EDITOR.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

What offers for back issues Ballet Today 1946/1955. Box 312.

"THE ASHLEY MARRIAGE BUREAU", 10 Corporation St., Manchester. Successful introductions arranged for those seeking happy marriage. A highly confidential reliable service.

SCHOOLS

RICHMOND (Surrey)

THE NORAH WEBBER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS Education, Ballet, Drama, Singing. 143/145 Kew Rd. RIC 5046.

BALLET GUIDE

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

Nov. 14 to Dec. 8, *Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow*

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

W/c.	Oct. 29	*Kings Theatre, Glasgow*
,,	Nov. 5	*His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen*
,,	,, 12	*King's Theatre, Edinburgh*
,,	,, 19	*Globe Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees*
,,	,, 26	*New Theatre, Hull*
,,	Dec. 3	*Theatre Royal, Nottingham*

FESTIVAL BALLET

W/c.	Oct. 29	*The Hippodrome, Bristol*
,,	Nov. 5	(2 weeks) *Theatre Royal, Birmingham*
,,	,, 19	*Olympia, Dublin*
,,	,, 26	*Opera House, Belfast*
,,	Dec. 3	*Theatre Royal, Newcastle*

Festival Ballet will have a London season at the *Stoll Theatre* Dec. 19 to Jan. 19. Evenings only.

LUISILLO AND HIS SPANISH DANCE THEATRE

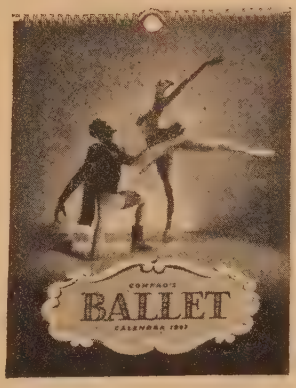
October 31st–November 24th. *Princes Theatre, London*

JOSE GRECO AND HIS SPANISH DANCERS

Dec. 24th to Jan. 12th *Festival Hall, London*

ALICIA MARKOVA and ANTON DOLIN

Where the Rainbow Ends. Coliseum, London
From Dec. 24th (mats. only)



CONRAD'S
BALLET
CALENDAR
1957

Now available at all high-class stationers.

RETAIL PRICE
4/6 EACH

SHELAGH ELLIOTT-CLARKE
THE THEATRE SCHOOL OF THE NORTH-WEST

Comprehensive training in all branches of Dance and Drama

DAY SCHOOL with limited hostel accommodation for artistic children between the ages of ten and seventeen

GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL SUBJECTS

ART *MUSIC* *DANCE* *DRAMA*

63 Rodney Street, Liverpool 1 **ROYal 3323**

THE EUPHAN MACLAREN THEATRE SCHOOL

FULL STAGE TRAINING
CHILDREN CAREFULLY TRAINED
JUNIOR BALLET CLASS EVERY DAY

Apply for Prospectus
THE STUDIO, 10 SCARSDALE VILLAS,
KENSINGTON, W.8 Western 6605

THE BOLSHOI THEATRE BALLET

A unique volume published in Moscow.
Beautifully illustrated.

price 8s 6d
(postage 1s 6d)

•

And three smaller books on
Russia's leading ballerinas

GALINA ULANOVA
2s 6d

RAISA STRUCHKOVA
1s

MAYA PLISETSKAYA
1s

From all booksellers and
CENTRAL BOOKS LIMITED
2 Parton St., London, WC1

DANCING IN ACTION

through 3-D glasses

By Sonia Stiller. A book on ballet dancing which has proved extremely popular in the U.S.A. In it the author presents, in a highly original way, many exercises and devices which she has developed during years of teaching ballet. Two hundred and fifty dance illustrations explain the text and twelve movements are illustrated by 3-D line drawings which, viewed through the spectacles provided with each book give the illusion of movement. In addition, five 3-D photographs illustrate special positions, and a glossary of ballet terms is included. A really valuable book for students of the ballet. 10/6 net.

PITMAN

Parker Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2

Seventeen shillings and sixpence a year will bring a friend a monthly reminder of your good taste in selecting

BALLET TODAY

as a Christmas Gift

Complete one of these forms NOW

I wish to subscribe for myself

My Name and Address:-

.....

.....

17/6 enclosed

PLEASE SEND TO:-

Name and Address of friend

.....

.....

I enclose remittance value 17/6

Signed .....

.....

.....

Subscription Rate: for 10 issues per year: Home and Overseas 17/6d.

Ballet Today 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey, England.

BOOKS

Reviewed by
PIGEON CROWLE

Galina Ulanova. By Galina Ulanova and B. Luov-Anokhin. (*Soviet News, London*, 5*s*.)

We have seen enough of Ulanova in various films to realise something of her quality, and yet it is likely that we have seen but the shadow of her art. By the time these words are in print we will, I hope, have exchanged the shadow for the substance.

This little booklet is, therefore, most opportune. In some autobiographical notes the great ballerina describes her background and career, and reveals a personality that is sincere, courageous and deep-thinking.

Luov-Anokhin, the well-known Soviet ballet critic, contributes an appreciation. There is a variety of photographs which are, on the whole, of a higher standard than the usual run of Russian ballet photographs. The translation is admirable.

A History of Russian Music. By R. A. Leonard. (*Jarrolds*, 30*s*.)

Russian music has, very naturally, inspired many choreographers in their finest works, and ballet owes a big debt to the Russian composer. In connection with the great classical ballets the name of Tchaikovsky, of course, at once springs to mind and it is doubtful if these masterpieces by Petipa and Ivanov would have survived the passing of the years had it not been for his music.

Stravinsky and Prokofiev have both written settings for great choreographic works, and very often, of course, a concert piece has been used in creating a masterpiece such as *Scheherazade* to music by Rimsky-Korsakov or Helpmann's *Hamlet* set to Tchaikovsky's *Fantasy Overture*.

In one way or the other, Borodin, Moussorgsky, Scriabin, Glinka, Balakirev, Tcherepnine, Rachmaninov, Liadov, Khachaturyan, and Shostakovitch are among other Russian composers who have provided music for well-known and often famous ballets; while Fokine, Massine, Balanchine, Nijinska, Ashton, Lifar, Jooss, Tudor, Bollender are just a few of the choreographers linked with them. Ashton's *Birthday Offering* to Glazunov's *The Seasons* is the latest example from the inexhaustible store.

Yet most ballet-goers, I venture to suggest, know very little of the careers of these composers, and still less of the history of Russian music, which it is customary to regard as a recent phenomenon, beginning with Glinka and flowering in the space of the past hundred years. Actually, there have been two great epochs and both had a common origin in the impact upon the Russian of a foreign culture.

The first period was in the tenth century when Byzantine church music was introduced; the second started when, under Royal patronage, Italian opera became a favourite entertainment. Because of strong national feeling allied to a keen interest and pleasure in the arts outside his own country (when not restricted politically), the Russian has always been able to take an outside influence and change it into something that seems to belong to him.

As a result, in less than a century and a half, Russian music passed through an astonishing metamorphosis from a few imitators of Italian opera to a great nationalistic school which has produced some of the world's most potent music artists. Set against the colourful and fabulous Russian scene, their lives often read like plays by Tchekov and Turgeniev. Well written, and filled with significant detail, I found this book enthralling. There are seventeen illustrations from portraits.

Ballet in Moscow Today. By Hélène Bellew. (*Thames & Hudson*, 35*s*.)

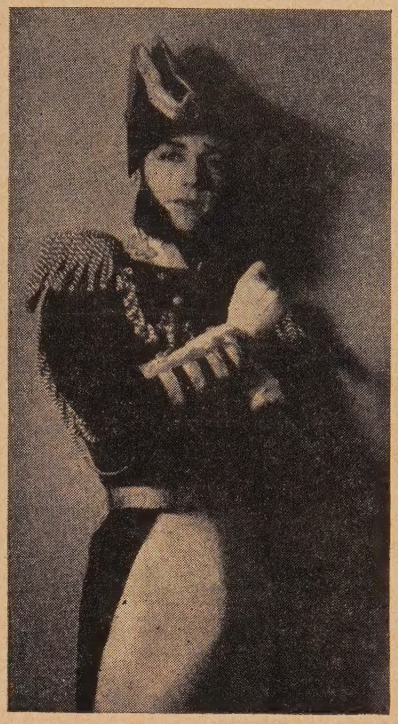
Here is a record of the complete repertoire of the Bolshoi company (fifteen full-length ballets), with notes on the leading dancers and soloists, and an appraisal and analysis of Soviet ballet technique, and—as the famous company is now making its first visit to Western Europe and the author, herself, was once an accomplished dancer—it all has an especial interest and value.

Many older ballet-goers will remember Hélène Bellew as Kirsova, a Danish member of the de Basil company and creator of various roles including that of the Butterfly in Fokine's enchanting ballet, *L'Epreuve d'Amour*. She left the company in 1936 during the Australian tour to marry, form her own company, and do pioneer work for ballet in that country. Eventually she returned to Europe, and this year visited the U.S.S.R. to gather material for this book, and her survey appears to be impartial and unclouded by political prejudice of any kind.

Continued on next page

Ready mid-November

The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet



David Blair in Pineapple Poll

Edited by
HUGH FISHER

In ten years the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet has established itself as a strong and individual company. This book provides a full record of the company, its dancers and the ballets performed. Also recorded is the work of the composers, choreographers and designers. With 80 stage and action photographs.

10×7½ ins.
12s. 6d. net

An Introduction to Benesh Dance Notation

RUDOLF and JOAN BENESH
Introduction by ARNOLD HASKELL

The Benesh system of dance notation has aroused an extraordinary amount of interest. It has been hailed by some as one of the most important events of the century so far as the dance is concerned; others, for one reason or another, have decried it. This introduction is an admirable exposition of what the system is, how it can be used for recording movement of all kinds and how the notation may be interpreted. 10s. 6d. net.

Just Published

The Ballet Annual 1957

Edited by ARNOLD HASKELL

The eleventh issue of this handsome record of the year in ballet. With a colour frontispiece and more than 100 photographs. 25s. net.

Ballet Decade Edited by ARNOLD HASKELL

An exceptionally well illustrated volume containing the outstanding articles and photographs from the first ten issues of *The Ballet Annual*. With four colour plates and many photographs. 25s. net.

Ballet Technique

Mme. TAMARA KARSAVINA

A collection of Mme. Karsavina's valuable and practical essays on technique. With an introduction by Margot Fonteyn and 27 illustrations. 10s. 6d. net.

Write for our complete list
of books on the ballet

A. & C. BLACK · SOHO SQUARE · LONDON W.1

for the

Ballerina

of the family

OFFICIAL STOCKISTS TO THE R.A.D.

We Stock :

All Regulation Dress and Exam Garments, Tights, Leotards, etc.

also

Ballet and Tap Shoes, etc.

Personal visitors welcomed

Mail Orders receive prompt attention.

E. GANDOLFI LTD.

Theatrical and Ballet Shoe Makers

Showroom

Dorset House · 150 Marylebone Rd · London N.W.1

near Baker St. Station)

WELbeck 8083 and 6049

SIGURD LEEDER SCHOOL OF DANCE

MODERN BALLET

FULL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
AMATEUR CLASSES FOR MEN AND WOMEN
OPEN CLASSES FOR PROFESSIONALS

46a REGENT SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1
Tel : TERminus 1915

HANOVA SCHOOL

Modern Physical Routine and Dance
Central European and Indian Style

Enquiries:

4, Craven Hill, Bayswater, W.2.

Tel: Wes. 0297

Books continued from previous page

One small point was new to me. Mme. Kirsova says that children entering the Bolshoi School at the age of seven receive three years of general education before starting ballet class. Until the beginning of the war, at any rate, so I have been told by a well-known Bolshoi ballerina, the students had their first ballet lessons immediately on entering the school. The time lag appears to be a recent innovation.

Many of the exciting photographs were taken during performance, and though they are often lacking in clarity and have sometimes been clumsily retouched, this is the fault of most Russian ballet photographs and cannot be blamed on the publishers of this well-produced book.

Our " Famous Ballerina Life Stories " have so far included:

Margot Fonteyn	**Pts. 1–3**	**Apr.–June 1955**
Alicia Markova	**Pts. 1–4**	**Aug.–Nov. 1955**
Ulanova	**Pts. 1–2**	**Dec. 1955–Feb. 1956**

Copies are still available from BALLET TODAY *Office price* **1/3** *each part (post paid)*

YOUNG

IN ENGLAND

IT was very obvious to those watching the demonstration of double work by David Poole, with the assistance of Margaret Holford and Susan Salomon, on the Cecchetti day of the annual congress of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing last July, that they were seeing work of outstanding quality. Here was the classical grand manner in all its nobility, breadth, ease and poetry: the slow parts were perfectly poised, and the fast parts had that wonderful combination of brilliance and suddenly arrested " pictures " found only in classical ballet at its best.

The occasion had an added element of drama because sixteen-year-old Margaret Holford, just graduating into the tough world of professional ballet, had hurt her ankle, and showed only a few supported pirouettes. In fact, as she discovered later, she had broken a bone: it was quite extraordinary that she was able to dance at all, much less show such speed and control. Her injury meant that thirteen-year-old Susan Salomon had to take Margaret Holford's place (" at very short notice ", as they say in the theatre) in work that was much too difficult for her—above all the *Sleeping Beauty* pas de deux. It was a terrifying ordeal for Susan, since her audience consisted entirely of teachers and critics. But she rose to the occasion magnificently: at first she showed a little nervousness and uncertainty, just as any ballerina would have done under the circumstances, but then she seemed to draw strength and confidence from some inner reserve and put all the appropriate nobility and individuality into her performance.

Her success was due in good measure to the splendid partnering of David Poole, one of the finest living exponents of this difficult art. But it was also made possible by the years in which she had been steadily and imaginatively brought forward by Nesta Brooking, the great English teacher who was also responsible for the remarkable work by the temporarily crippled Margaret Holford.

I was lucky enough to have seen both these baby ballerinas dancing at a school show given at Nesta Brooking's studio in Hampstead last June. For me this show was chiefly remarkable because it showed a new Margaret Holford, who had flowered from a strong technician into a seductive and scintillating soubrette. She was seen at her best in *The Passing Fancy*, a gay comedy ballet which displayed to good advantage both Nesta Brooking's remarkable professional talent as a choreographer (regrettably neglected by English ballet companies) and the highly developed individuality and puckish sense of humour of its heroine.

It was characteristic of Nesta Brooking's training that though this show brought together students and highly experienced professional " guest artists " such as Michael Holmes, there was no obvious line of demarcation between the two. In some cases the artists made the best of both worlds: e.g. Susan Saloman (who has done interesting work on television in a ballet arranged by Kenneth Macmillan, *Punch and the Child*) and the famous film-star Mandy Miller (who shows promise of developing into a fine dancer as well as a fine actress).

I think one of the main reasons why the Brooking pupils show such stage presence and expressive spontaneity is the choreographic classes which they have every week. Great talent in choreography is of course very rare, but Nesta Brooking has proved that every dancer has it in some degree, and that this talent can be fostered by carefully graded exercises, leading on from simple improvisations up to elaborate ballets involving a complicated counterpoint of movements and the expression of varied moods and characters. When dancers have learned composition, they are in a strong position to understand from the inside the musical and expressive aspects of dancing—an understanding often sadly lacking in the corps de ballet dancers of companies, and even in their soloists. It is no accident that both the Cecchetti Branch of the I.S.T.D. and the R.A.D. have begun to pay more and more attention to training in choreography in schools: this is one of the most interesting and encouraging developments in British ballet.

FERNAU HALL

DANCERS

Opposite page.
Margaret Holford as the Fisher Girl in The Passing Fancy: Photo Paul Wilson.

Left: David Poole and Susan Salomon in a demonstration of double work. Annual Congress of Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, July 1956. Photo: Fernau Hall.

IN CHINA

THE Peking School of Dance, China's first regular national ballet school, gave a concert performance in the big open-air theatre in Chungshan (Sun Yatsen) Park at the end of its summer term. The programme, with 34 numbers including excerpts from classical ballet, Chinese and international folk dances and Chinese classical items, provided an excellent opportunity to review the progress of the school since its formation two years ago.

Founded in 1954 by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the school aims to provide a seven-year training, which includes general education up to high school level, for some 300 students of 11 years old and upwards. They have been selected from among gifted children in primary and secondary schools or, in the case of the older pupils, from performers in the dance and song companies of the People's Liberation Army and those of various cities and national minority areas. Since none of these, with the exception of the Army companies, has been in existence more than a very few years, it will be seen that the general body of experience is not great. All the more remarkable therefore, is the high standard of the performance, particularly in the classical Western ballet, an entirely new medium for Chinese dancers.

The ballet numbers selected for the display were popular ones—dances from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and the *Nutcracker Suite*, Glazunov's *Raymonda*, Delibes' *Coppelia* and Strauss waltzes. Particularly fresh and energetic was the performance of the Waltz from the *Sleeping Beauty* by a group of teachers and students together, while the earnest concentration of the three children who danced the Shepherd Boy dance from *Nutcracker* was highly endearing.

The folk-dances from the Soviet Union, Rumania and Yugoslavia filled the stage with stimulating movement and the colour of brilliant peasant costumes. A mock-stately version of the mazurka by a Soviet composer performed by first and second year students, and the vigorous, whirling Rumanian dance—in which some young Vietnamese students attending the school also took part—were specially infectious in their gaiety and humour.

Over half the dances in the programme were composed by members of the teaching staff or students of the school's choreography class. These adapted some of the elements of Chinese classical and folk dancing to express stories and ideas from present-day life—tractor driver and collective-farm girl, grandpa and grandma going to literacy classes, the traditional spring outing of peasants in the Huai River valley. Notably successful were the adaptations of some of the minority peoples' dances, such as the robust yet fluid Ordos Dance from Inner Mongolia, which won a first prize in the folk dance contest at the Fifth World Youth Festival in Warsaw last year. This was composed by Chia Cho-kuang, a choreography student who is himself a member of the Inner Mongolian Song and Dance Ensemble.

The music for the dances in this latter group, composed or arranged by the school's music department or by outside composers, was mostly based on folk tunes and had a strong national flavour. The school has its own orchestra of traditional Chinese instruments. For the performance, this was augmented by the Orchestra of the People's Liberation Army.

Published by courtesy of "China Reconstructs"

PHYLLIS BEDELLS
VICE-PRESIDENT ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCING
SCHOOL OF BALLET -
Professional and Amateur
BALLET (R.A.D.) CHARACTER, NATIONAL, MODERN, BALLROOM, STAGE
INCLUSIVE TRAINING FOR STUDENTS
28 QUEX ROAD, WEST HAMPSTEAD, N.W.6
Maida Vale 2324

Children's Speciality
Our hand-stitched, soft-toe shoes for the children are smooth, flexible, and perfect fitting like gloves, specially made for carefree and happy dancing.
Please send outline of the ft.

D. Di Salvo
SHOES SUPPLIED TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE COVENT GARDEN AND THE SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE COMPANY
Famous Bespoke Sun-ray Ballet Shoes Supplied to all Parts of the World—Specialists in correct fitting

ALL SHOES NOW IN STOCK	s. d
Blocked Satin, Pk. Wht. or Blk. ..	16 0
Unblck. Satin, Pk. Wht. or Blk. ..	15 0
Block, Canvas, Pk. Wht. or Blk. ..	12 6
Unblck. Canvas, Pk. Wht. or Blk. ..	10 6
Blocked White Leather and all colours ..	18 0
Unblck., Best Quality Coloured Leather in Red, Blk., Pk., Blue or any other colour	16 6

Postage and Packaging extra 6d. per pr.
Write: D. DI SALVO, 11 WEST STREET, CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS, LONDON, W.C.2
Telephone: Tem. Bar 9201, 4134.

HILDE HOLGER
SCHOOL OF MODERN BALLET
Curriculum: Modern Technique — Classical Technique — Dance Composition — Choreography
PRODUCTION GROUP
Intensive Evening Course — Professionals—Amateurs—Children
Secretary, 27 Oval Road, Regents Park, London, N.W.1. *Phone: GULliver 6822*

ALL THE STARS

Alicia Markova
Margot Fonteyn
Nadia Nerina
Svetlana Beriosova
Violetta Elvin
Elaine Fifield
Rowene Jackson
Natalie Krassovska
Beryl Grey

KNOW

Ballet

SHOES

AND TIGHTS BY

ANELLO & DAVIDE

Ballerina's Shoemaker

96 CHARING CROSS ROAD,
LONDON, W.C.2 TEMple Bar 5019